BOSTON UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Thesis

LIBRARY CHOICES OF INTERMEDIATE GRADE PUPILS

Submitted by

Mildred L. O'Toole

(B.S. Ed. Salem Teachers' College, 1936)

In partial fulfillment of requirements for
the degree of Master of Education

May, 1947

First Reader: Dr. Donald D. Durrell, Professor of Education

Second Reader: Dr. Helen B. Sullivan, Associate Professor of Education

Third Reader: Dr. W. Linwood Chase, Professor of Education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Donald D. Durrell, Dean of the School of Education, Boston University, for his help in planning and carrying out this study.

I also wish to thank Miss Ruth Hazelton, children's librarian, for her cooperation in making this study possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLES AND GRAPHS

TABLES AND GRAPHS (continued)

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

PROBLEM:

The purpose of this study was to make a survey of the types of books voluntarily chosen in a public library by pupils in Grades four, five, and six.

This investigation is set up in an attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What types of library books are chosen most frequently by boys and girls in Grades four, five, and six?

2. What is the influence of sex on the type of book selected?

3. How does chronological age affect the type of book selected?

4. What is the influence of mental age on the type of book selected?

5. What is the influence of reading level on the type of book selected?

The importance of determining pupils' reading interests in reading materials has long been recognized. Surveys and research studies to determine these interests can be divided into four main types:

1. Questionnaires filled out by pupils
2. Reading materials submitted to pupils for a choice or grading
3. General surveys of the kinds of books pupils read, buy, and loan to other pupils
4. Library surveys to determine the types of books pupils borrow.

During the school year 1926-27, Lancaster[1/] submitted a questionnaire ballot to 4,469 pupils in Illinois. He found that of the fifty-four most popular books, thirty-four were general fiction; thirteen were fairy tales and fables; four were animal fiction; one was a geographical reader; and two were historical narratives. He concludes:

> It is clear that the children sought amusement rather than instruction in their reading.[2/]

Using the same method of pupil questionnaire,

1/ Thomas J. Lancaster, "A Study of Voluntary Reading Interests of Children in Grades IV to VIII," Elementary School Journal, 28:525-537, March, 1928.

2/ Ibid., p. 528.

Johnson[3] reported data regarding the out-of-school reading interests of 1,856 boys and girls in Duluth. He found that girls read more than boys, but boys spent more time reading magazines and newspapers. Boys were more interested in adventure, while girls preferred books about home, school and children. A number of the most popular authors were those whose books were also favorites thirty to fifty years previously. Over 80% of the pupils who participated in this study used the public libraries.

Winkler,[4] polling the newspaper reading interests of 2,863 pupils, from first grade through high school, found that the trend of interest among boys was definitely toward material connected with the world outside and critical comment upon it. The interests of girls seemed personal and subjective, romantic and emotional.

The findings of Broening,[5] from a voluntary questionnaire carried on in public libraries in Baltimore, indicate the same trends. The following list shows the per

---

3/ B. Lamar Johnson, "Children's Reading Interests as Related to Sex and Grade in School," The School Review, 40:257-272, April, 1932.

4/ Marian Lee Winkler, "The Newspaper Reading Interests of Children," Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University. Boston, 1934.

5/ Angela M. Broening, "Factors Influencing Pupils' Reading of Library Books - A Baltimore Book Survey," Elementary English Review, 11:155-158, June, 1934.

cent of pupils who favored each category of books as a first choice:

Adventure, 47%

Fairy Story, 26%

Make and Do Things, 24%

Funny Book, 22%

Real Person, 13%

True Event, 9%

Animal, 8%

Home or School, 7%

Travel, 6%

Everyday Wonder, 3%

From the intensive and careful investigation of Lazar,[6/] a number of findings are pertinent to this study. She found that the two main trends in types of books were popular juvenile series and standard children's classics. Girls showed interest in boys' books, but boys showed little interest in girls' books. Girls who read boys' books were chiefly bright girls; but boys who read girls' books were chiefly dull boys. Titles of fairy tale books were mentioned more often by dull children than by the bright or average. An analysis of the reasons for the popularity of the series books showed that children liked them chiefly because of elements of adventure, action, excitement, and thrills.

6/ May Lazar, Reading Interests, Activities and Opportunties of Bright, Average, and Dull Children. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers' College, Columbia Univ. 1937, 127 pp.

Biographies, essays, and accounts of personal experience were read by only a small percentage of the pupils.

The pupil population in Zeligs'[7] study is similar in several respects to the population used in this investigation. Hence her findings are significant. From reports on the voluntary reading of three hundred twenty-five pupils in the upper seventy-five per cent of the sixth grades in a Cleveland suburb, she found that boys' and girls' reading interests differ. Boys showed no interest in girls' books, but girls enjoyed books written for either sex.

Findings in agreement, for the most part, with those in the aforementioned studies, come from an investigation by Witty and Coomer.[8] They write:

> A perusal of the favorite titles of the intermediate grades (four through six) reveals the gradual maturing of the tastes of these boys and girls. Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse persist as favorites, but they fall back in rank to give place to Lassie Come Home, Mr. Popper's Penguins, Black Beauty, and Silver Chief.[9]

As in previous studies, they found poetry at the

7/ Rose Zeligs, "What Sixth Grade Children Are Reading," Elementary English Review, 14:257-262, November, 1937.

8/ Paul Witty and Ann Coomer, "Children's Choices of Favorite Books, A Study Conducted in Ten Elementary Schools," Journal of Educational Psychology, 37:266-278, May, 1946.

9/ Ibid., p.267.

bottom of the list of favorites:

> Only one book of poetry, Little Brown Baby, received enough votes to appear in the composite list of favorites. The bulk of votes for this book came from a large Negro school in Chicago. 10/

From the composite findings of their study, Witty and Coomer conclude:

> In the balanced reading program of the modern school, it is recognized that the child's choice of reading materials is an important consideration. This study has made it clear that children are characterized by wide and varied interests which lead them to choose a rich and varied assortment of books in many fields. Accordingly, the modern teacher will require access to varied materials if interests are to be satisfied and directed through reading into proper channels. 11/

A summary of the findings of all of these questionnaire surveys indicate differences between the reading interests of boys and girls. Girls read books of interest to boys, but boys do not read girls' books. Stories of adventure, action, and mystery are top favorites, while poetry falls near the bottom.

The second type of investigation in this field has been to submit reading material to children, having them indicate their preferences. An outstanding study of this type was carried on by Gates, Peardon, and Sartorious. 12/ The reading

10/ Ibid., p.269.

11/ Ibid., p.277.

12/ Arthur I. Gates, Celeste Comegys Peardon and Ina Craig Sartorious, "Studies of Children's Interests in Reading," Elementary School Journal, 31:656-670, May, 1931.

material presented to the children was of two types, narrative and informative. They found that:

> ... informative selections of the types chosen from available material during the period 1925-30 when read to, or read by, children under the conditions of the experiment, are preferred by pupils in the first three grades about three times out of ten in comparison with narrative selections.13/

As a partial explanation of this they say:

> In this study the uses made of the informative materials were not extensive ... It is a matter of keen regret that the follow-up activities to which each of the types led were not accurately determined and appraised ... It would seem that, when an activity or project is under way, information related to the project and capable of promoting it would reach its maximum in interest, intelligibility, and utility. 14/

The third type of investigation in this field has been a general survey to determine pupils' reading interests.

In Hockett's[15/] study, five hundred boys and girls in "Z-sections" of grades four, five and six kept lists of books they had read, indicating those they liked best. From the composite list, the one hundred most frequent titles were chosen and submitted to four hundred "Z-section" pupils in different schools. These pupils checked the titles of the books they had read, and indicated those they liked best. Hockett found

---

13/ Ibid., p. 657

14/ Ibid., p. 668

15/ John A. Hockett, "Reading Interests of Z-Section Pupils," Elementary School Journal, 36: 26-39, September, 1935.

strong sex preferences. He attempted to determine the characteristics that made certain books popular, and found they coincided closely with Gates'[16] findings. Gates[17] presented the following fourteen qualifications of books which appeal to children:

1. Animalness: degree to which animals appear and participate.

2. Moralness: degree to which the selection teaches a moral lesson; gives example of moral behavior, etc.

3. Verse form: degree to which the selection resembles verse form.

4. Poeticalness of thought: degree of real poetic character or feeling apart from mere verse form.

5. Liveliness: degree of action, movement; degree to which things happen.

6. Narrativeness: degree to which selections purport to tell a story.

7. Humor: how funny or amusing.

8. Repetition: repetition of ideas, either in the same or different words.

9. Realism: degree to which events and characters are lifelike.

10. Fancifulness: unreal or imaginary in character.

11. Plot: degree to which selection has a sustained plot.

12. Familiar experience: degree to which things and events are familiar.

13. Surprise: unexpected turn of events or conversation.

16/ Arthur I. Gates, Interest and Ability in Reading, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931. 264 pp.

17/ Ibid., pp. 71-72.

14. Conversation: degree to which conversation is given verbatim.

Like Hockett's survey, Brumbaugh's[18/] was a general survey, including interviews with parents, librarians, salesmen in book stores, and the checking of book sales in Five and Ten Cent Stores. She found that, while children care little for literary style, they enjoy dramatic action, humor and adventure. Books that featured recent motion pictures were popular. Salesmen in book stores reported that mystery, romance, adventure, travel and invention sold in this order.

The fourth and final type of survey in this field has been library surveys, or inventories of the types of books children borrow from libraries.

Jordan[19/] took an inventory of the children's books in several New York City public libraries, listed the books which were borrowed frequently, talked with librarians and children, and observed the books children read in the library as well as those they borrowed. Among his findings are the following data:[20/]

18/ Florence Brumbaugh, "Children's Choices of Reading Materials," Elementary English Review, 16:226-228, October, 1939.

19/ Arthur M. Jordan, Children's Interests in Reading, New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1921, 143 pp.

20/ Ibid., pp. 128-129.

1. The interests of boys and girls in reading are very dissimilar.

2. The major interests of boys from 10 to 13 years in reading are included in four general types of fiction:

   (a) Books concerned with war and scouting,

   (b) Those concerned with school and sports,

   (c) Those concerned with the Boy Scouts,

   (d) Those concerned with strenuous adventure.

3. Interests of girls are primarily concerned with fiction which portrays:

   (a) Home, 73 per cent,
   (b) Home and School, 19 per cent,
   (c) School, 15 per cent,
   (d) Fairy stories, 16 per cent,
   (e) Miscellaneous, 10 per cent.

The most minutely detailed of all the investigations reviewed in this chapter was carried on by Fediaevsky[21] at the Institute of Out-School Work in Moscow. A library record of each child borrower included the following information: name, age, sex, social position; literal records of the child's requests for books; notes on the child's opinion of the books he read; notes concerning the child's use of the book and the material in it; and, finally, notes on the child's reactions as he listened to stories read aloud. The investigator concludes:[22]

21/ Vera Fediaevsky, "Methods of Studying Children's Interests in Reading," Elementary English Review, 4:3-15, January, 1927.

22/ Ibid., p. 14.

It is interesting to note that the results of our researches made in totally different conditions, i.e., in another country, among children of another race and by other methods, coincide very often with the results of the intensive American researches on this subject. For instance:

1. We also note the difference between boys' and girls' literature interests.

2. The books noted in the "Winnetka Graded Book List" and by the "Children's Reading" as those preferred by children are, translated into Russian, also found to be favorites of Russian children.

The author further states:[23]

The fact of this coincidence proves that there are elements in books which appeal to every child of a certain age, and that there are laws in children's reading interests which we can study and which we must know.

The last investigation to be reviewed here, and the one most similar to this research is that made by Campbell[24] in Larchmont, New York. Of the seven hundred fifty-three children using the library, those eleven years of age led in registration. Fiction, biography, and fairy tales were the types of books preferred. The author concludes:[25]

In general, the problems of one library are similar to those of another. It follows then that as soon as the reading habits of children in a number of libraries have been checked, the results should help the teacher, the school librarian, and the children's librarian, wherever they may work, in their effort to create a love of reading ...

23/ Ibid., p. 15.

24/ Clara Evelyn Campbell, "A Research Problem in Children's Reading," Elementary English Review, 6:1-2, January,1929.

25/ Ibid., p. 2.

After reviewing the available studies in the field of children's reading interests, this investigator found that there were no studies of the particular type she wished to make.

As stated previously, the purpose of this study is to survey the types of books voluntarily chosen in a public library by pupils in Grades four, five and six; and to compare the types of books chosen with the pupils' age, sex, mental age, and reading level.

CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION OF EXPERIMENT

CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION OF EXPERIMENT

As stated in Chapter I, the purpose of this study is to survey the types of books voluntarily chosen in a public library by pupils in Grades four, five, and six.

DESCRIPTION OF PUPIL POPULATION AND PUBLIC LIBRARY:

The pupils whose library choices are surveyed in this study attend a public, elementary school in suburban Boston. The economic standing of this residential community is above average. Of the 167 pupils in the survey, only two come from families where a foreign language is spoken.

The public library in this community is close to the school. This library has a permanent collection of 2500 juvenile books, and a constantly changing loan collection of 200 children's books. Each class in the school visits the library weekly with the teacher during school hours for a period of free reading. During this weekly period, the teacher and the librarian are available to answer questions, help locate books, aid in the use of reference material, and give advice when requested. However, there is no compulsion of any kind, and pupils are free to read what they choose. Most of the pupils use this period to return books to the library and select others for home reading. During the last fifteen

minutes of each period, the librarian reads to the class.

DESCRIPTION OF SURVEY:

For a period of six consecutive weeks a record was kept of all the books voluntarily chosen and taken home by 167 pupils in Grade four, five, and six. Of the total juvenile circulation of 2073 library books for the six-weeks period, 1019 books were taken home by the 167 pupils in the survey.

The following categories were used in classifying the books:

1. Mystery and Adventure
2. Mythology, Fable and Fairy Tales
3. Animal Stories
4. History and Travel - Other Lands and People
5. Biography and Autobiography
6. Science and Mechanics
7. Sports and Hobbies
8. Poetry, Music, Fine Arts

The pupils did not know that this survey was being conducted, so it may be assumed that this survey presents a normal sampling of their library choices both in number and in type of books.

The ages of the children ranged from nine to twelve. A frequency table of ages is given on the following page.

TABLE I

AGE FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN

IN GRADES IV, V, AND VI

	Grade IV		Grade V		GRADE VI		
AGE	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	TOTAL
9	17	25	4				46
10	5	5	25	22	1	1	59
11			4	5	20	28	57
12					1	4	5
TOTAL	22	30	33	27	22	33	167

The age of the greatest number of children is ten years. Eleven is the age having the next greatest number. The range of this table is from nine to twelve years of age.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF DATA

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF DATA

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the investigator considers the interpretation of the survey's findings and their implications in regard to sex, chronological age, mental age, and reading level.

In arriving at conclusions, choices were first tabulated according to grade level and sex under the following categories:

1. Mystery and Adventure
2. Mythology, Fable, and Fairy Tales
3. Animal Stories
4. History and Travel - Other Lands and People
5. Biography and Autobiography
6. Science and Mechanics
7. Sports and Hobbies
8. Poetry, Music, Fine Arts

The table on the following page shows the total number of books in each of the above categories read by 77 boys and 90 girls in Grades Four, Five, and Six during the 6-week period of the survey.

TABLE II

TOTAL NUMBER OF BOOKS SELECTED IN EACH

CATEGORY ACCORDING TO GRADE AND SEX

	GRADE 4		GRADE 5		GRADE 6		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Total
Mystery and Adventure	68	103	85	121	63	121	561
Mythology, Fable and Fairy Tales	9	27	16	49	7	47	155
Animal Stories	14	15	42	40	4	24	139
History and Travel - Other Lands and People	12	5	9	20	1	1	48
Biography and Autobiography	25	1	6	8	5	10	55
Science and Mechanics	5	0	7	0	7	0	19
Sports and Hobbies	3	0	20	6	11	0	40
Poetry, Music, Fine Arts	1	1	0	4	0	2	8
Total	137	152	185	248	98	205	1025

To interpret further the data in Table II, the per cent of the total number of books selected in each category was determined. It will be noted from Table III that more than half the books selected were stories of mystery and adventure. Stories of animals together with mythology, fables, and fairy tales constituted about thirty per cent of the total number. The sum of the per cents of the last five categories constituted sixteen per cent of the total number.

TABLE III

NUMBER AND PER CENT OF

CHOICES IN EACH CATEGORY

	No.	Per Cent
1. Mystery and Adventure	561	55
2. Mythology, Fable, and Fairy Tales	155	15
3. Animal Stories	139	14
4. Biography and Autobiography	55	5
5. History and Travel	48	4
6. Sports and Hobbies	40	4
7. Science and Mechanics	19	2
8. Poetry, Music, Fine Arts	8	1

CHOICES ACCORDING TO SEX DIFFERENCES

In order to answer the question of who reads more, boys or girls, and in order to interpret statistically the data in Table II, the following eight tables were constructed, one for each category of choices.

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' CHOICES OF BOOKS OF MYSTERY AND ADVENTURE

	No.	Mean	Standard Error of Mean	Diff. of Mean	Standard Error of Diff.	Critical Ratio
Boys	77	2.805	.268	1.028	.390	2.636
Girls	90	3.833	.283			

In this table, the critical ratio of 2.636 is significant. It would seem that in the intermediate grades girls read more books of mystery and adventure than do boys.

TABLE V

COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' CHOICES OF BOOKS OF MYTHOLOGY, FABLE, AND FAIRY TALES

	No.	Mean	Standard Error of Mean	Diff. of Mean	Standard Error of Diff.	Critical Ratio
Boys	77	.416	.111	.951	.206	4.617
Girls	90	1.367	.174			

In this table, the critical ratio of 4.617 is significant. It would seem that in the intermediate grades girls read more books of mythology, fable, and fairy tales than do boys.

TABLE VI

COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' CHOICES

OF ANIMAL STORIES

	No.	Mean	Standard Error of Mean	Diff. of Mean	Standard Error of Diff.	Critical Ratio
Boys	77	.779	.154	.099	.228	.434
Girls	90	.878	.168			

In this table, the critical ratio of .434 is not significant. It would seem that boys and girls in the intermediate grades read approximately the same number of animal stories.

TABLE VII

COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' CHOICES OF BOOKS OF HISTORY AND TRAVEL - OTHER LANDS AND PEOPLE.

	No.	Mean	Standard Error of Mean	Diff. of Mean	Standard Error of Diff.	Critical Ratio
Boys	77	.286	.108	.003	.141	.021
Girls	90	.289	.091			

In this table, the critical ratio of .021 is not significant. It would seem that boys and girls in the intermediate grades read approximately the same number of books of history and travel.

TABLE VIII

COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' CHOICES OF BOOKS OF BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

	No.	Mean	Standard Error of Mean	Diff. of Mean	Standard Error of Diff.	Critical Ratio
Boys	77	.468	.121	.257	.138	1.862
Girls	90	.211	.067			

In this table, the critical ratio of 1.862 is not significant. It would seem that boys and girls in the intermediate grades read approximately the same number of books of biography and autobiography.

TABLE IX

COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' CHOICES OF BOOKS OF SCIENCE AND MECHANICS

	No.	Mean	Standard Error of Mean	Diff. of Mean	Standard Error of Diff.	Critical Ratio
Boys	77	.247	.091	.247	.091	2.714
Girls	90	0	0			

In this table, the critical ratio of 2.714 is significant. It would seem that in the intermediate grades boys read more books of science and mechanics than do girls.

TABLE X

COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' CHOICES OF BOOKS OF SPORTS AND HOBBIES

	No.	Mean	Standard Error of Mean	Diff. of Mean	Standard Error of Diff.	Critical Ratio
Boys	77	.442	.120	.375	.127	2.953
Girls	90	.067	.041			

In this table, the critical ratio of 2.953 is significant. It would seem that in the intermediate grades boys read more books of sports and hobbies than do girls.

TABLE XI

COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' CHOICES OF BOOKS OF POETRY, MUSIC, FINE ARTS

	No.	Mean	Standard Error of Mean	Diff. of Mean	Standard Error of Diff.	Critical Ratio
Boys	77	.013	.013	.065	.038	1.711
Girls	90	.078	.036			

In this table, the critical ratio of 1.711 is not significant. It would seem that boys and girls in the intermediate grades read approximately the same number of books of poetry, music, and fine arts.

To summarize the data from the eight preceding tables, it would seem that in the following categories boys in the intermediate grades read more books than girls:

1. Science and Mechanics
2. Sports and Hobbies

It would seem that in the following categories girls in the intermediate grades read more books than boys:

1. Mystery and Adventure
2. Mythology, Fable, and Fairy Tales

In the following categories it would seem that there is no significant difference between the number of books read by boys in the intermediate grades and the number read by girls:

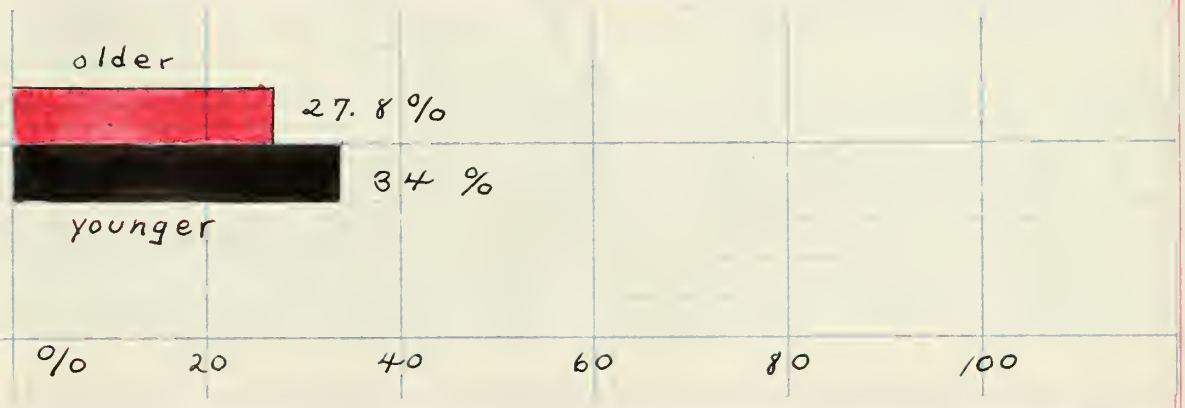
1. Animal Stories
2. History and Travel - Other Lands and People
3. Biography and Autobiography
4. Poetry, Music, Fine Arts

CHOICES ACCORDING TO CHRONOLOGICAL AGE

In order to determine the effect of chronogical age on the type of book selected, the choices of the fifty oldest children were compared with the choices of the fifty youngest children. The chronological ages of the fifty oldest children ranged from 11 years, 2 months to 12 years, 4 months. The chronological ages of the fifty youngest children ranged from 9 years, 1 month to 10 years, 0 months.

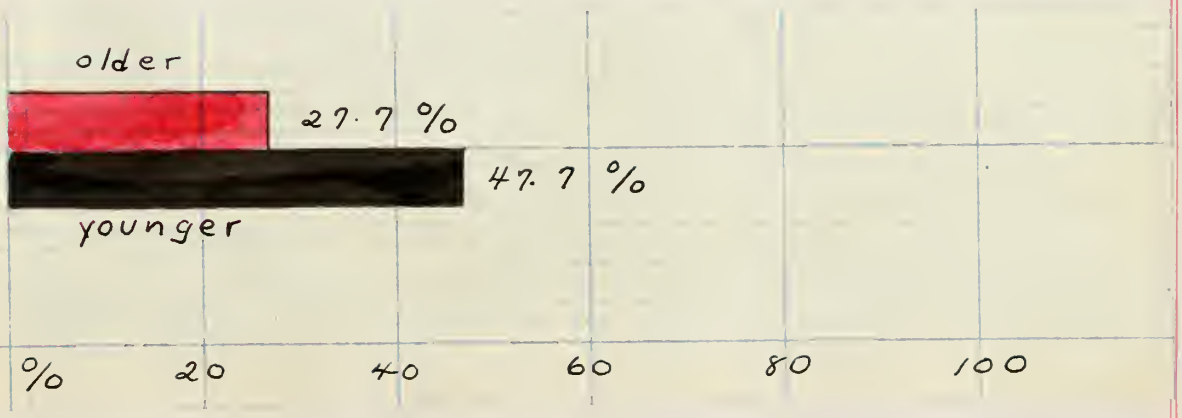
The following eight graphs show the per cent of the total number of books of each category read by the fifty oldest pupils in this survey, and the per cent of the total number of books in the same category read by the fifty youngest pupils in this survey.

GRAPH A PER CENTS OF BOOKS OF MYSTERY AND ADVENTURE READ BY OLDEST AND YOUNGEST



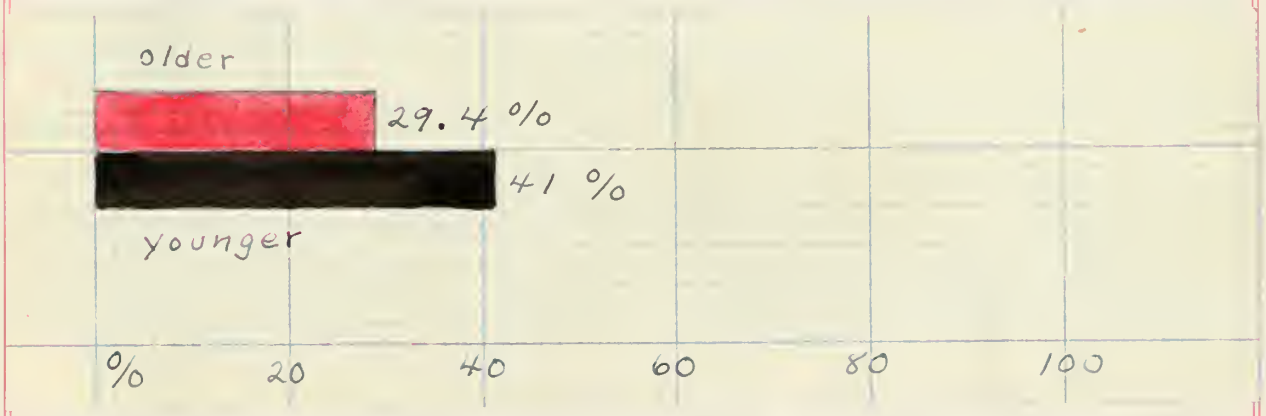
From Graph A it would seem that older pupils read about the same number of books of mystery and adventure as do younger pupils.

GRAPH B PER CENTS OF BOOKS OF MYTHOLOGY, FABLE, AND FAIRY TALES READ BY OLDEST AND YOUNGEST



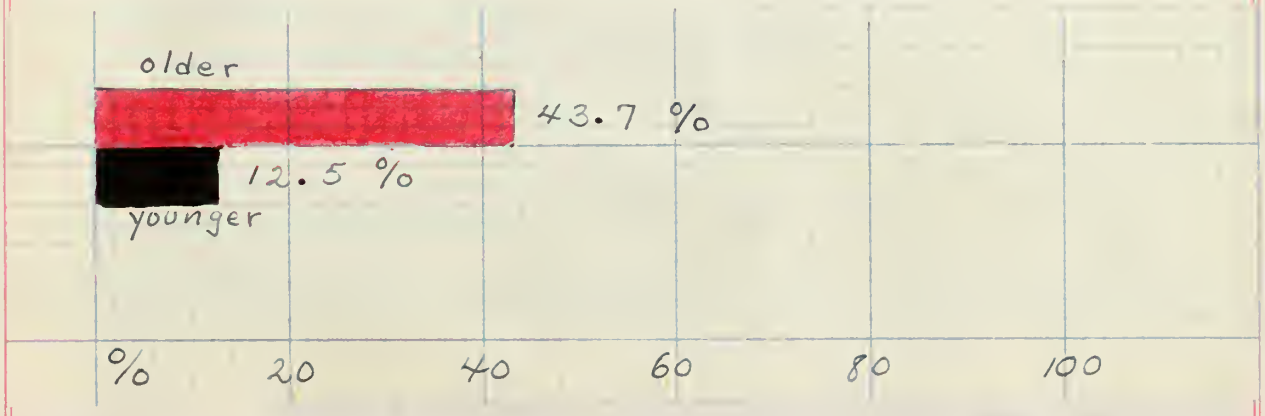
From Graph B it would seem that younger pupils read more books of mythology, fable, and fairy tales than do older pupils.

GRAPH C PER CENTS OF BOOKS OF ANIMAL STORIES READ BY OLDEST AND YOUNGEST



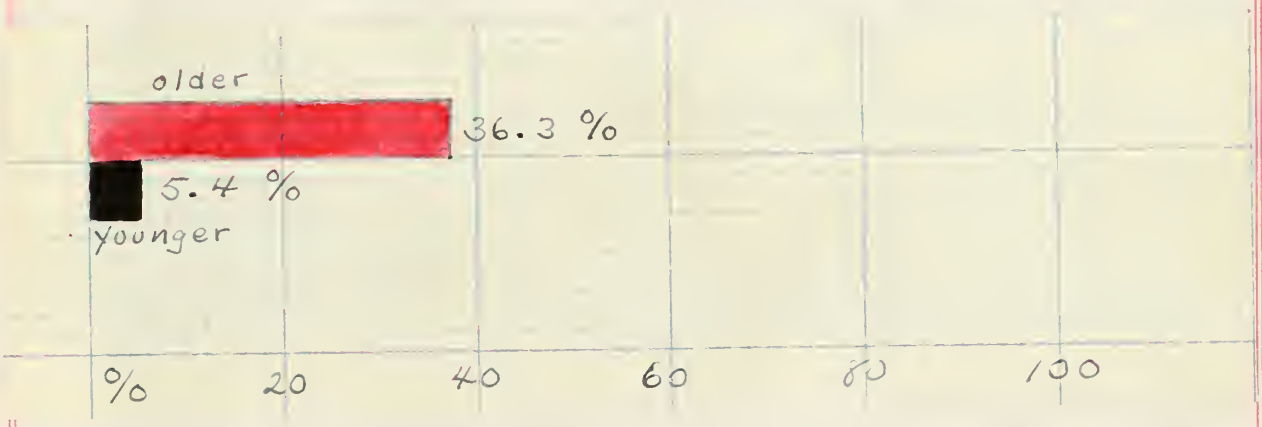
From Graph C it would seem that younger pupils read about the same number of animal stories as do older pupils.

GRAPH D PER CENTS OF BOOKS OF HISTORY AND TRAVEL READ BY OLDEST AND YOUNGEST



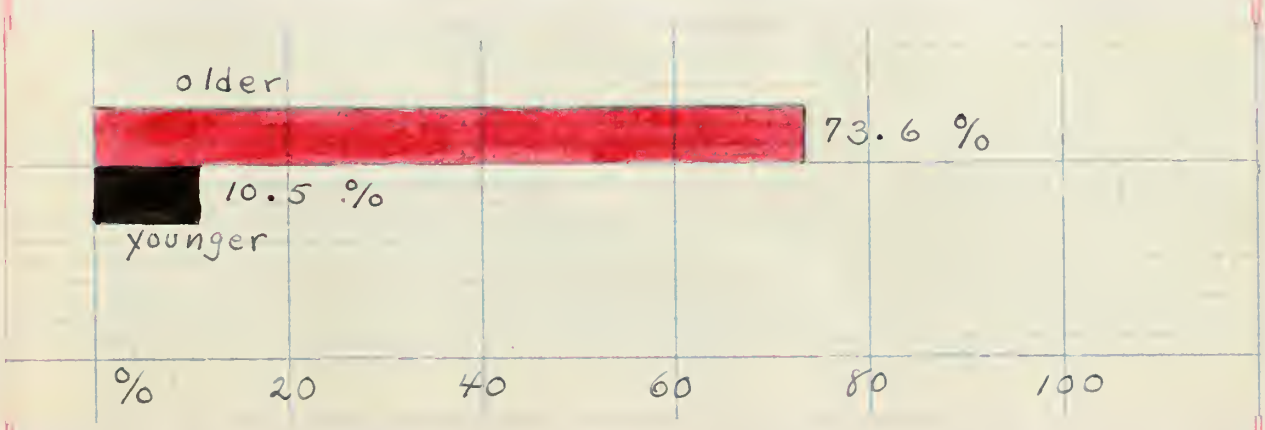
From Graph D it would seem that older pupils read more books of history and travel than do younger pupils.

GRAPH E PER CENTS OF BOOKS OF BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY READ BY OLDEST AND YOUNGEST



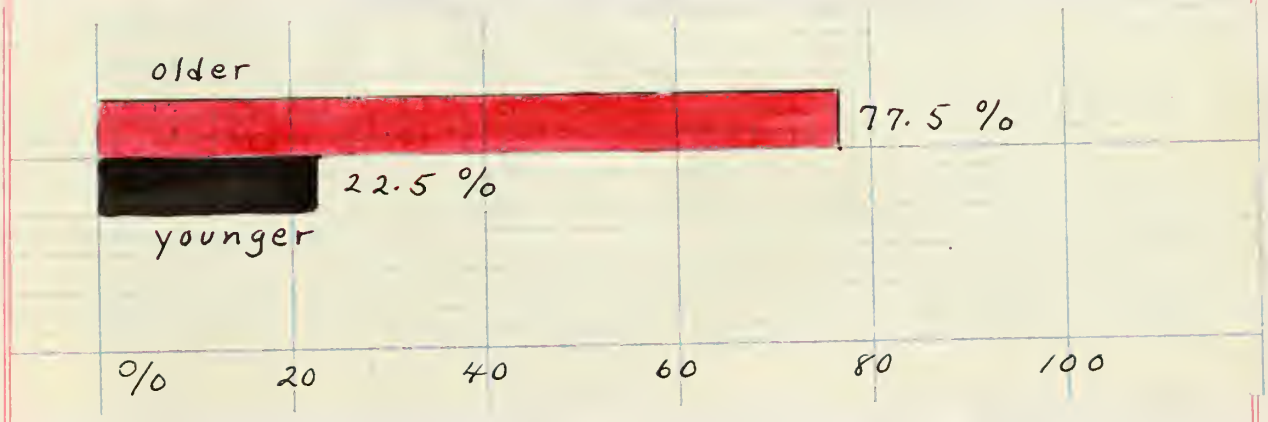
Graph E indicates that older pupils read many more books of biography and autobiography than do younger pupils.

GRAPH F PER CENTS OF BOOKS OF SCIENCE AND MECHANICS READ BY OLDEST AND YOUNGEST



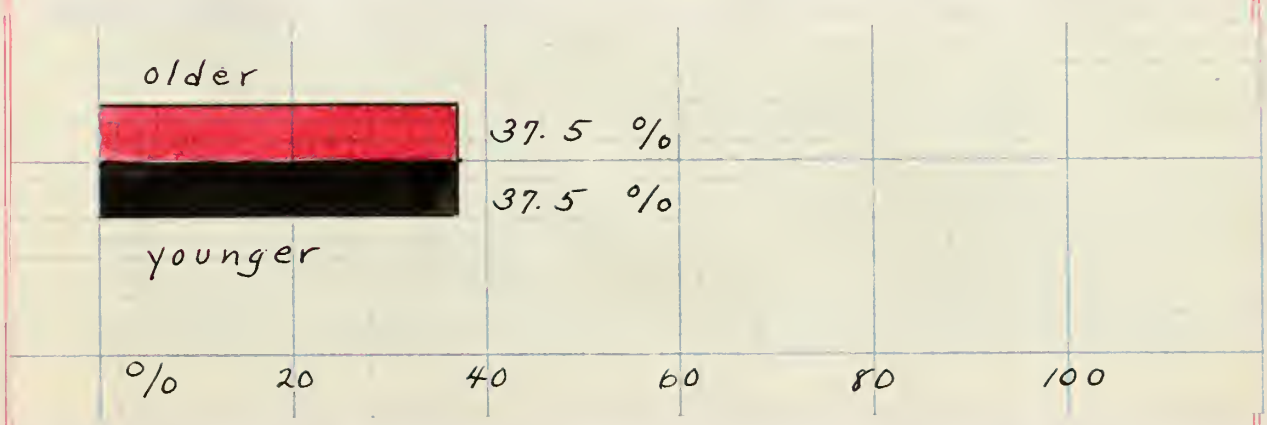
Graph F indicates that older pupils read many more books of science and mechanics than do younger pupils.

GRAPH G PER CENTS OF BOOKS OF SPORTS AND HOBBIES READ BY OLDEST AND YOUNGEST



Graph G indicates that older pupils read many more books of sports and hobbies than do younger pupils.

GRAPH H PER CENTS OF BOOKS OF POETRY, MUSIC, AND FINE ARTS READ BY OLDEST AND YOUNGEST



Graph H indicates that older and younger pupils read close to the same number of books of poetry, music, and fine arts.

CHOICES ACCORDING TO MENTAL AGE

To determine the effect of mental age on the type of book selected, the choices of the fifty children with the highest mental ages were compared with the choices of the fifty children with the lowest mental ages. The fifty highest mental ages ranged from 12 years, 4 months to 15 years, 2 months. The fifty lowest mental ages ranged from 9 years, one month to 10 years, 3 months.

The table on the following page shows the per cent of the books of each category selected by the 50 children with the highest mental ages, and the per cent of the books of each category selected by the 50 children with the lowest mental ages.

TABLE XII

PER CENTS OF CHOICES OF UPPER AND

LOWER MENTAL AGE GROUPS

	50 Highest mental ages	50 Lowest mental ages
1. Mystery and Adventure	26.5%	29.8%
2. Mythology, Fable, and Fairy Tales	30.9%	50.9%
3. Animal Stories	30.2%	52.5%
4. History and Travel - Other Lands and People	56.2%	18.7%
5. Biography and Autobiography	58.1%	20%
6. Science and Mechanics	63.2%	1.5%
7. Sports and Hobbies	77.5%	5%
8. Poetry, Music, Fine Arts	25%	37.5%

From Table XII it appears that:

1. Children of the highest and lowest mental ages in the intermediate grades read about the same number of books of mystery and adventure.
2. Children of the lowest mental ages in these grades seem to read more books of mythology, fable, and fairy tales than do children of the highest mental ages.
3. Children of the lowest mental ages in these grades seem to read more animal stories than do children of the highest mental ages.
4. Children of the highest mental ages seem to read more books of history and travel than do children of the lowest mental ages.
5. Children of the highest mental ages seem to read more books of biography and autobiography than do children of the lowest mental ages.
6. Children of the highest mental ages seem to read many more books of science and mechanics than do children of the lowest mental ages.
7. Children of the highest mental ages seem to read more books of sports and hobbies than do children with the lowest mental ages.
8. Children of both the highest and lowest mental age groups seem to read about the same number of books of poetry, music, and fine arts.

CHOICES ACCORDING TO READING LEVEL

To determine the effect of reading level on the type of book selected, the choices of the fifty children with the highest reading level were compared with the choices of the fifty children with the lowest reading level. The reading levels of the fifty highest children ranged from grade 7, 2 months to grade 9, 8 months. The reading levels of the fifty lowest children ranged from grade 3, 2 months to grade 5, 4 months.

The table on the following page shows the per cent of the books of each category selected by the 50 children with the highest reading levels, and the per cent of the books of each category selected by the 50 children with the lowest reading levels.

TABLE XIII

PER CENTS OF CHOICES OF UPPER AND LOWER

READING LEVEL GROUPS

	50 Highest Reading Levels	50 Lowest Reading Levels
1. Mystery and Adventure	30.4%	32.6%
2. Mythology, Fable, and Fairy Tales	31.6%	44.5%
3. Animal Stories	28.7%	35.2%
4. History and Travel - Other Lands and People	52%	8.2%
5. Biography and Autobiography	34.5%	9%
6. Science and Mechanics	68.4%	10.5%
7. Sports and Hobbies	65%	22.5%
8. Poetry, Music, Fine Arts	50%	12.5%

From Table XIII it appears that:

1. Children of the highest and lowest reading levels in the intermediate grades read about the same number of books of mystery and adventure.
2. Children of the highest and lowest reading levels in these grades read about the same number of books of mythology, fable, and fairy tales.
3. Children of the highest and lowest reading levels in these grades read about the same number of animal stories.
4. Children of the highest reading levels in these grades seem to read more books of history and travel than do children of the lowest reading levels.
5. Children of the highest reading levels seem to read more books of biography and autobiography than do children of the lowest reading levels.
6. Children of the highest reading levels seem to read more books of science and mechanics than do children of the lowest reading levels.
7. Children of the highest reading levels seem to read more books of sports and hobbies than do children of the lowest reading levels.
8. Children of the highest reading levels seem to read more books of poetry, music, and fine arts than do children of the lowest reading levels.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This survey of the library choices of intermediate grade pupils was made with the purpose of finding answers to the following questions:

1. What types of library books are chosen most frequently by boys and girls in grades four, five, and six?
2. What is the influence of sex on the type of book selected?
3. How does chronological age affect the type of book selected?
4. What is the influence of mental age on the type of book selected?
5. What is the influence of reading level on the type of book selected?

For a period of six consecutive weeks, the investigator tabulated all the books chosen from a public library by 167 pupils in Grades four, five, and six in an elementary school. This pupil population of 77 boys and 90 girls came from an area of upper economic level. Their chronological ages ranged from 9 years, 1 month to 12 years, 4 months. Their mental ages, from Kuhlman-Anderson Tests, ranged from 9 years, 1 month to 15 years, 2 months. Their reading levels, from

Stanford Achievement Tests, ranged from grade 3, 2 months to grade 9, 8 months.

From the data obtained the following conclusions and observations were drawn:

1. More than fifty per cent of the total number of books selected were stories of mystery and adventure.
2. Stories of animals together with mythology, fables, and fairy tales constituted about thirty per cent of the total number selected.
3. The sum of the books in the following categories constituted sixteen per cent of the total number:
   A. Biography and Autobiography
   B. History and Travel
   C. Sports and Hobbies
   D. Science and Mechanics
   E. Poetry, Music, Fine Arts
4. Boys selected more books of science, mechanics, sports, and hobbies than did girls.
5. Girls selected more books of mystery, adventure, mythology, fable, and fairy tales than did boys.
6. In the following categories there was no significant difference between the number of books selected by boys and the number selected by girls:

A. Animal stories

B. History and travel

C. Biography and autobiography

D. Poetry, music, fine arts

7. When choices were compared according to chronological ages it appeared that there was little difference between the numbers of books of mystery, adventure, animal stories and poetry selected by the older and younger children.

8. In the following categories the older children appeared to select more books than the younger children:

   A. History and travel

   B. Biography and autobiography

   C. Science and mechanics

   D. Sports and hobbies

9. The younger children appeared to select more books of mythology, fable and fairy tales than did the older children.

10. When choices were compared according to mental ages it appeared that there was little difference between the numbers of books of mystery, adventure and poetry selected by the upper and lower mental age groups.

11. Children of the upper mental age groups appeared to select more books of history and travel,

biography and autobiography, science and mechanics, and sports and hobbies than did children in the lower mental age group.

12. Children in the lower mental age group appeared to select more books of mythology, fable, fairy tales and animal stories than did children in the upper mental age group.

13. When choices were compared according to reading levels it appeared that there was little difference between the numbers of books of mystery, adventure, mythology, fable, fairy tales and animal stories selected by the upper and lower reading levels.

14. Children in the upper reading level appeared to select more books of history and travel, biography and autobiography, science and mechanics, sports and hobbies, and poetry than did children in the lower reading level.

SUGGESTED FURTHER STUDY

1. Make a study of the relative reading difficulty of children's books of history, travel, biography, autobiography, science, mechanics, sports, and hobbies to determine why children who are poor readers do not frequently select books of these types.

2. Conduct a similar survey in an area of lower economic level to compare the findings with those of this survey.

3. Investigate the actual amount of reading of library books as compared to the number of books children take home from a library.

4. Develop and test methods of increasing pupil reading of library books.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Belser, Danlyn, "The Reading Interests of Boys," Elementary School Review, 3:292-296, November, 1926.

Broening, Angela M., "Factors Influencing Pupils' Reading of Library Books - A Baltimore Book Survey," Elementary English Review, 11:155-158, June, 1934.

Brumbaugh, Florence, "Children's Choices of Reading Materials," Elementary English Review, 16: 226-228, October,1939.

Campbell, Clara Evelyn, "A Research Problem in Children's Reading," Elementary English Review, 6: 1-2, January, 1929.

Coy, Genevieve Lenore, The Interests, Abilities and Achievements of a Special Class For Gifted Children. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1923, 194 pp.

Fediaevsky, Vera, "Methods of Studying Children's Interests in Reading." Elementary English Review, 4: 3-15, January, 1927.

Gates, Arthur I., Interest and Ability in Reading. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931, 264 pp.

Gates, Arthur I., Peardon, Celeste Comegys, and Sartorious, Ina Craig, "Studies of Children's Interests in Reading," Elementary School Journal, 31: 656-670, May, 1931.

Harrington, Harlan Lewis, "Comic Books and Children's Reading Interests." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1945.

Hackett, John A., "Reading Interests of Z-Section Pupils," Elementary School Journal, 36: 26-39, September, 1935.

Johnson, B. Lamar, "Children's Reading Interests as Related to Sex and Grade in School," The School Review, 40: 257-272, April, 1932.

Jordan, Arthur M., Children's Interests In Reading. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1921, 143 pp.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Jordan, Arthur M., "Children's Interests in Reading," (A Review of Research Articles from 1935-1939), High School Journal, 25: 223-230, November, 1942.

Kimmel, Dorothea, "Guiding Child Interest in Reading For Pleasure," Elementary School Journal, 45: 512-515, May, 1945.

Lancaster, Thomas J., "A Study of Voluntary Reading Interests of Children in Grades IV to VIII," Elementary School Journal, 28: 527-537, March, 1928.

Lazar, May, Reading Interests, Activities and Opportunities of Bright, Average and Dull Children. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1937, 127 pp.

Leary, E. B., "What Does Research Say About Reading?" Journal of Educational Research, 39: 434-444, February, 1946.

Leistokow, L. M., "Inventory of What Children Voluntarily Select To Read," Elementary School Journal, 39: 11-12, September, 1938.

McKee, Paul, Reading and Literature in the Elementary School. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1943, 378 pp.

Storm, Grace E., "Areas of Children's Literature," Elementary School Journal, 45: 503-511, May, 1945.

Thorndike, Robert L., and Henry, Florence, "Differences in Reading Related to Differences in Sex and Intelligence Level," Elementary School Journal, 40: 751-763, December, 1939.

Winkler, Miriam Lee, "Newspaper Reading Interests of Children." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1934.

Witty, Paul, and Coomer, Ann, "Children's Choices of Favorite Books, A Study Conducted in Ten Elementary Schools," Journal of Educational Psychology, 37: 266-278, May, 1946.

Wright, Ethel C., "Favorite Children's Books of the Past Decade," Elementary English Review. 12: 101-104, April, 1935.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Zeligs, Rose, "What Sixth Grade Children Are Reading," Elementary English Review, 14: 257-262, November, 1937.